1: Jenness--85
116, 835, 837

(1913-16) 1922

Copper Eskimo

"The custom of interchanging wives for a longer or a shorter period leads to a curious extension of the family.(1) The children of the two families are considered as brothers and sisters, katangotit, and marriage between them is forbidden. Apparently this is not due to any uncertainity as to their real parentage (a circumstance that must sometimes occur nevertheless), for the exchange may have been effected only once, and each family have two or three children."

"1. Cf. the discussion by Gilbertson in the Journal of Religious Psychology, Vol. VII."

"The head [86] of a visiting family will often connect himself in this way with the group that he is visiting; he ceases to be a stranger, and therefore a potential enemy, in his new community. A Kanghiryuak family, for example, arranged such an exchange with a visiting Puivlik family in the summer of 1915. Often, however, the same bond is found uniting two families that live more or less permanently in the same district. An exchange is then most likely to occur when they come together again after being separated for a few months(1). Thus the Noahognik Eskimo Aksiatak who spent the summer of 1914 on the south side of Dolphin and Union strait exchanged wives for a night with the Puivlik native Haviuyak as soon as the two groups came together again in the fall. The exchange took place in the most casual and informal manner, without the slightest attempt at concealment. It was repeated a week later, although on the second occasion, instead of the women temporarily changing huts, it was the men who moved over. Similar instances occurred frequently later; in fact they were so usual that they passed al-

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"1. Dr. D. Neumann (The Eskimo, Nome, Alaska, March, 1919) says that in Alaska interchange of wives and adoption of children were not unusual at all reunions. Mr. Stefansson makes the same observation concerning the Mackenzie river natives (Anthrop. Papers, A.M.N.H., Vol. XIV, pt. 1, p. 164)."

most unnoticed in the communities.

Occasionally there is some definite advantage to be derived from an exchange of wives. Thus a few weeks after the above-mentioned incident Haviuyak's wife accompanied Aksiatak to an Akulliakattak settlement on south-west Victoria island, because she wanted to visit her sister there; Aksiatak's own wife, of course, remained behind to keep house for Haviuyak. In many cases, however, lust seemed to be the only motive. The shaman Uloksak was one of the most influential men among the western Copper Eskimos; moreover he had three wives. In December, 1915, he sent two of them over to Avranna's hut one evening, and the latter had to send back his own wife Milukkattak in exchange, although she was then with child. The same thing happened again a month later. Milukkattak, in speaking about it afterwards, said that neither she nor her husband wanted to have any dealings with Uloksak and his family, but they were afraid of the shaman and did not dare to refuse."

1: Jenness--238-239 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 837

"The interchange of wives, while it is not restricted to winter, is far commoner at that period. Avranna and Uloksak pooled their wives one winter's night--Avranna's one wife and Uloksak's three. All four women, with the two men and a little baby, crowded [239] naked into a single sleeping bag. Towards morning they separated, Avranna with two of Uloksak's wives removing to another sleeping bag, while Uloksak remained with the other two women and the baby.

Whatever the causes may be sexual immorality is certainly very rife amongst them, and as certainly disregarded as a matter of no importance. Even the children are doubtfully pure. A married man deliberately mishandled a little girl in the presence of other people, and his action met with no condemnation. The relatives would doubtless interfere if the children were subjected to any annoyance, but as long as no trouble arises no one takes any notice. I never knew of any girl being a mother before she married, for the simple reason that girls always marry about puberty, and never remain single for any length of time afterwards, at least not as long as they retain their youth. On the other hand I never observed any instance of that hospitality so notorious among other Eskimos, wherein a man lends his wife to his guest. It may occur nevertheless, and an honoured guest who made such a request would certainly be gratified; but travelling natives are almost invariably accompanied by their own wives, and cement their friendships, if they so wish, by the regular method of exchanging

wives rather than by borrowing. Of course, in the end, there is very little difference as far as the results are concerned."

2: Stefansson--234
837, 117

(1908-12) 1914

Copper Eskimo

"'Modesty.' Have seen no signs of sexual hospitality which Mackenzie Eskimo have told me was part of ordinary courtesy to a guest."

3: Rasmussen--155 (c. 1923) 1932 Copper Eskimo
116, 533, 837

[Footnote] "Song-fellows are allowed to lie with one another's wives and often give them handsome skins as presents. In this song the singer ironizes over his opponent, whom he calls 'the great lampoon-singer', but at the same time mocks him because he has no better ideas than that in his song he draws attention to the fact that his wife has received skins for clothing from his opponent--which to the singer seem a trivial and necessary consequence--a proof of his lack of talent, when he tries to be malicious."

13: Jenness--89 (1914-1916) 1917 Copper Eskimo
116, 595, 837

"Family organization is, in its general features, very similar to our own. Interchange of wives, however, is common, polygamy frequent, and polyandry not unknown."

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

787
123 sticks that only the white man knew how to manufacture; but even they were not powerful enough to restore his wandering senses. Perhaps my hand would be more efficacious. I laid it on his temple, and saw his eyes rest on me without a gleam of intelligence. Then the madness passed out of them, a pleased smile broke over his countenance, and, quietly turning away, he began a casual conversation with some of the bystanders.

771 Performances of this kind revealed to me the heart of Eskimo religion. The natives trusted in their medicine-men, and the medicine-men, with rare exceptions, believed themselves gifted with supernatural powers. The spirits that wander unseen came at their bidding and obeyed their commands. At times they came unsummoned, and a man raved on the hill-sides or on the frozen sea where no one beheld his frenzy.
771 Hysteria is peculiarly common around the Polar basin;
158 the long winter darkness and the loneliness and silence
171 of the hunter's life make the Arctic peoples more susceptible to this disorder than the rest of the human race. So religion and hysteria went closely hand in hand.

114 After measuring all the adults in this village I
125 arranged with a native to guide me to another some
114 forty miles farther west. We had travelled about half
837 a mile when, looking back, I noticed with surprise that
574 a woman was following in our trail. I turned to my

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

guide and asked, "Who is this woman, and why does she follow us?" "It's only Snow-Knife's wife," he answered. "She is coming with us to visit her two sisters. Don't trouble about her. She will stay with me throughout our journey, and in the meantime my wife will live with Snow-Knife."

Marriage here was evidently not the institution we are taught to reverence. This woman had openly traded husbands for a few days in order to visit her relatives; and there were times when men seemed to exchange wives without even that excuse. I had read of the custom in books, but its impression was different when it occurred before my own eyes without the least attempt at concealment. It became more intelligible later, with fuller knowledge of their domestic life. The people were not really immoral, for they were doing no wrong according to the standards of life handed down to them through countless generations; and the transfer of wedlock was not made indiscriminately, but according to definite regulations. A man often had wives in half a dozen different tribes, some of whom he saw only once in his lifetime; and the wives had other husbands. But their children were all his children, forbidden to marry one another; and if ever he visited the tribe to which one of his wives belonged he received a cordial welcome, and was free to hunt and seal in its territory like the regular members of the community. A stranger in an Eskimo tribe

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

837 A stranger in an Eskimo tribe
609 was a potential enemy who could be killed at sight;
628 but by this system of temporarily exchanging wives the natives could travel in safety from one end of the country to the other.

114 So Mrs. Snow-Knife, or Mrs. Wealthy, as she now became for a few days, accompanied us to the village of the "People of the Land on the Other Side." She arranged the skins and meagre furniture of our snow-huts, tended the lamp, and boiled the seal meat for our
574 evening meal. I witnessed her meeting with her two
593 sisters, one much older than herself, the other a maiden of about fifteen years. She herself rejoiced without effusion; the maiden displayed more interest in the white man's sled than in the sister of whom she had heard nothing for nine months; but the eldest woman sat in her hut and wept copiously throughout the evening. They were typically human in their outlooks, these three sisters dwelling where the midday twilight and the midnight sun follow each other season after season. The young girl was just beginning life and her hopes were all in the future; Mrs. Snow-Knife had been married several years and held both the past and the future in an equal balance; but the eldest woman, though still in the prime of life, bore the stamp of hardship on her face and her mind was already looking backward.

574 The "People of the Land on the Other Side" were
535 too hospitable not to hold the usual dance in our

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

123
829 had scarcely outgrown the same beliefs. She asked more than one strange question about my people. "Was it true that some white men have arms that trail almost to the ground? Did my real mother have hair on her head like Eskimo women?" Not until I had lived with her family for six months, never leaving them for a single day, did she announce as a magnificent discovery, "You white men are just like ourselves." Even then she committed herself to no opinion concerning the "humanity" of white women!

574 The two tribes, having left most of their property
533 at the coast, had little to exchange except songs. A quartet practised inside my tent each evening, Ikpuck and Icehouse teaching the new songs from Dolphin and Union Strait and learning the latest compositions
574 of the Tormiat. Every one was happy until Ikpuck's
837 handsome face struck a responsive chord in the heart of the leading Tormiat woman. She dared not reveal her inclinations while her husband sat by her side, but on the third evening, when he was unexpectedly called from the tent, she leaned forward, ignoring Icehouse and myself, pressed her nose to Ikpuck's and, drawing back, coyly awaited his response. But Ikpuck sat like a graven image, making no sign; and Icehouse veiled her anger under a wan smile. There was silence for an interval. Then footsteps crunched in the snow outside, and the woman, pushing aside the door of the tent, disappeared hastily.

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

Ikpuck turned to me. "Did you see her?" he asked. 574 837.
But Icehouse cut short my reply. "The ridiculous creature. She can't dance, she can't even sing, but she's shameless enough to make love to a handsome man like you, Ikpuck. Did you ever see such an uncouth woman?"

Her tirade seemed never-ending. Even Ikpuck 593
wearied of it, though her flattering remarks about his good looks pleased his vanity. The poor woman was passionately fond of her husband, and the incident rankled in her memory for months. Gossiping with others she might mock the high-pitched voice and awkward gestures of her Tormiat rival, but in secret she brooded fearfully. She remembered her earlier widowhood, when her beauty was at its height and Ikpuck had divorced his first wife in order to marry her. They had hoped she would give him a son to sustain him in his old age; but their marriage was fruitless. Now she was growing old. Would he send her also away and take some younger woman who might grant him his heart's desire?

Icehouse had no reason for alarm. Ikpuck reciprocated her affection, and his thoughts never strayed to other fields. The old couple bickered like children, but their petty quarrels only held them more closely together. Every one knew that Icehouse's [597]
shrewd tongue concealed a generous heart, and little Knife-Blade, their adopted child, satisfied

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
ND8 Copper Eskimo ND8

574 all directions, and the whole band of the Musk-ox
123 tribe surrounded us, every household vying with the others in offering us hospitality. Girling went to one house, Patsy and I to another, and The Runner lodged with his brother.

602 This "brother" puzzled me. If Icehouse had only one son, as I had always understood, why did The
[597] Runner call the man his brother? Of course, he might
[601] be an adopted son like myself, but the Eskimos usually distinguished an adopted kinsman by adding a special suffix to the term of relationship. The mystery was
[837] soon explained. A quarter of a century earlier Ice-
[851] house's first husband had met the young man's father in this region and established a permanent relationship with him by a temporary exchange of wives. Although the youth was not born until three or four years afterward, The Runner considered him a true brother from whom he could claim all a brother's
[123] rights and privileges; and I, though a stranger and a white man, was his adopted brother, with a similar claim to his friendship and help.

572 When the villagers gathered for a dance that eve-
574 ning The Runner found still another connection. A Musk-ox man and his wife hailed him as their "dancing-companion," declaring that he had filled that rôle for them many years before when they were visiting Dolphin and Union Strait. In virtue of this relationship they claimed the right to extend the village's